

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Light emitted from a laser is divided into two light waves so that the ratio of the power of one light wave to the power of the other will be appropriate. The resultant light waves are irradiated to the same track on a medium. The preceding spot is used for erasure, and modulated so that the same pattern as the one formed with a recording pulse will be formed. The high-power component of the modulated light of the erasing spot causes the temperature of a recording layer to be equal to or higher than the melting point. The medium-power component of the modulated light forms a crystallizing temperature area on the recording layer. A liquid crystal diffraction grating is used to divide power, and a power division ratio is variable and controllable.